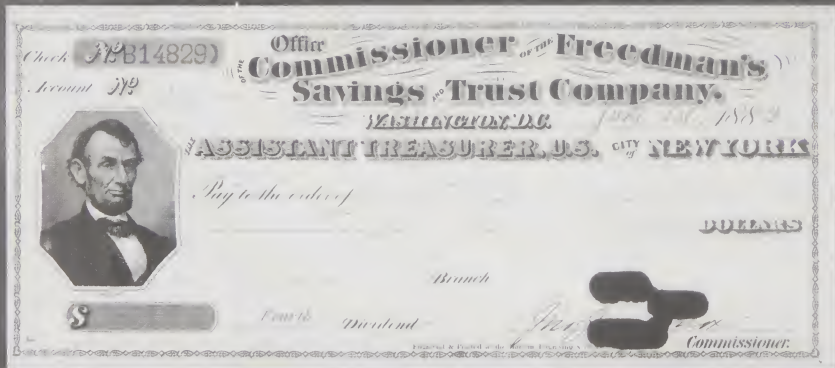
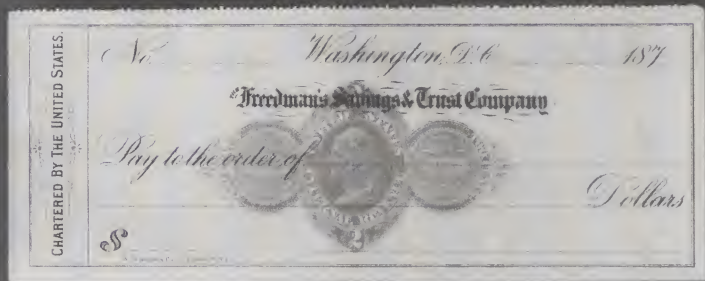


THE CHECK COLLECTOR

July-September 2003

The Journal of
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CHECK COLLECTORS, INC.

Number 67



Editor: Robert D. Hohertz
Box 190332
St. Louis, MO 63119-6332
(314)961-4399

Advertising Manager Melanie C. Hohertz
14712 Oakwood Rd
Minnetonka, MN 55345

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To our members:

Write something for *The Check Collector*! We need articles about checks, check-related subjects, and fiscal documents.

We retype all material. Illustrations require an **original** or a **good, clear, black and white copy, preferably as large as can be obtained**. Original checks sent in are copied and returned carefully. Any questions, ask the Editor!

To our advertisers:

Deadline for advertising copy to run in the October-December issue of *The Check Collector* is November 15.

The Check Collector is an effective means of reaching the check collecting hobby, and our membership of collectors and dealers in checks and related financial documents. It contains feature articles about checks and check collecting, and news about the hobby.

Advertisements must be paid in advance and shall be restricted to checks and related fiscal documents, publications, accessories, and supplies. The ASCC accepts advertising in good faith, reserving the right to edit copy. Copy for ads must be computer-ready or the Editor will set it as best he can.

ASCC assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising. However, it will reprint that portion of an advertisement in which a typographical error appeared upon prompt notification of such error.

All advertisements and payments should be submitted to the Advertising Manager at the address shown above.

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VISIT OUR WEB PAGE

<http://members.aol.com/asccinfo>

Our cover illustrates two unused checks connected with the Freedman's Savings & Trust Company to complement the lead article on Frederick Douglass and his connection with this bank. The top check is on violet paper and bears a Type D revenue imprint. The bottom one was printed on banknote paper and was signed by John Jay Knox, but never used.

Advertising rates are as follows:

One quarter page	\$25.00/issue
Business card size	\$15.00/issue
\$10 discount for four issues paid at once.	

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CHECK COLLECTORS, INC.

A non-profit organization organized under Section 501(c)-(3)

President:

Robert D. Hohertz
PO Box 190332
Saint Louis, MO 63119-6332
rshohertz@aol.com

Vice-President:

Michael S. Turrini
PO Box 4104
Vallejo, CA 94590

Secretary:

Coleman Leifer
PO Box 577
Garrett Park, MD 20896
CAL493@aol.com

Treasurer:

Dick Naven
6802 S. W. 33rd Pl.
Portland, OR 97219

Directors:

Lyman Hensley (2004)
Robert D. Hohertz (2004)
M. S. Kazanjian (2004)
Coleman Leifer (2003)
Dick Naven (2003)
Lee E. Poleske (2004)
Phillip G. Ryman (2003)
Robert A. Spence (Emeritus)
Michael S. Turrini (2003)

Departments:

Editor, *The Check Collector*:
Robert D. Hohertz - see above

Attorney
Hermann Ivester
5 Leslie Circle
Little Rock, AR 72205-2529

Check Pool:
Phillip G. Ryman
859 Park Circle
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
ryman859pa@aol.com

Librarian:
Charles V. Kemp
PO Box 71892
Madison Hts, MI 48071

Membership Directory:

Coleman A. Leifer - see above

Security Printers:
William G. Kanowsky
1533 Savannah Dr.
Evansville, IN 47714

Slide Program:
Larry Adams
812 1/2 Story St.
Boone, IA 50036

Regional Contacts:

New England, upstate NY
Robert Bird
8 Bartlett Drive
Georgetown, MA 01833

IL, IN, OH
Lyman Hensley
473 East Elm
Sycamore, IL 60178-1934

NJ, DE, MD
David Brase
5523 Halpine Place #202
Rockville, MD 20851

VA, WV, PA
Phillip G. Ryman
859 Park Circle
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

TN, KY
Joel Rind
14 W. 8th St.
Chattanooga, TN 37402

AR, MO, IA
Hermann Ivester
5 Leslie Circle
Little Rock, AR 72205-2529

MS, LA
Dale Flesher
130 Lakeway Dr.
Oxford, MS 38655-9666

NC, SC, GA, AL
Judith Murphy
Box 24056
Winston-Salem, NC 27114

Northern CA
Michael Turrini
PO Box 4104
Vallejo, CA 94590

OR, WA, ID
Dick Naven
6802 S.W. 33rd Pl.
Portland, OR 97219

Canada
Kevin Thorburn
103-67 Farnham Gate Rd.
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3M 4A6
Canada

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1. Checks, general
2. Checks, USA
3. US Government Checks
4. Miscellaneous Checks:
 - Bank Drafts
 - Bills of Exchange
 - Certificates of Deposit
 - Provisionary Notes
 - Warrants
 - Receipts
5. Checks Great Britain
6. Checks, Canada
7. Checks, World
8. Travelers Checks & Money Orders
9. Specimen Checks
10. Ration Checks
11. Refund/Rebate Checks
12. Other
13. Counter & Modern Checks
20. Vignettes
21. Autographs
22. Railroads, Steamboats, Mining
23. Banking History
24. Security Printing & Printers
25. Check Protectors & Cancel Devices
26. Wells Fargo History
30. Stock & Bond Certificates
31. Revenue Stamped Documents
32. Emergency Scrip

Frederick Douglass and the Freedman's Savings & Trust Company by Charles Kemp

Frederick Douglass was the best known black man of his era. A former slave who had escaped and then toured the North fearlessly exposing the evils of slavery, he was a mighty voice against it. Later in life he became a publisher and continued to crusade not only for equal rights for blacks but also for women.

He was born as Frederick Bailey in 1817 in Maryland to a slave mother and an unknown white man. When he was around seven his master, William Auld, sent him to live with relatives Hugh and Sophia Auld in Baltimore. Despite the fact that it was illegal in many states, Sophia began to teach Frederick to read from the Bible. When her husband found out he put a stop to it, but Frederick secretly continued on his own to teach himself.

One of the turning points in his life came when he was about thirteen and he bought his first book, "The Columbian Orator". It was this book that convinced him that slavery was unjust and should be struggled against. His new-found streak of independence caused him to be returned to William Auld, who then sent him to Edward Covey. A notorious "slave breaker," Covey beat Frederick daily for weeks until he finally turned on Covey and fought him to a draw. This happened when he was about seventeen, and he considered it to be another turning point.

Covey also returned Frederick to Auld, who next sent him back to Baltimore to work in a shipyard and learn the caulker's trade. Frederick not only learned that but taught himself to write as well. He also met and fell in love with Anna Murray, a free black woman, but when he asked permission to marry her it was refused. He became determined to escape and make a new life. With the help of a free black sailor he made his way to New York City where he sent for Anna and married her at last. The young couple then moved to New Bedford where Frederick sought employment, but the shipyards were all white and he was forced to work as a common laborer.

It was in New Bedford that Frederick took Douglass as his name after a character in "The Lady of the Lake" by Sir Walter Scott. It was also there that he began to read "The Liberator", the new paper of the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. This caused him to attend a convention of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. When he was asked to speak he gave such an eloquent account of his former life that the Society hired him as an agent. Soon working with the much larger American Anti-Slavery Society he rose to national prominence.

Frederick also wrote his autobiography, which brought him more acclaim. But fame had its drawbacks for escaped slaves, and he had to flee to England to avoid recapture. Once there, however, English friends arranged to purchase his freedom and he returned to settle in Rochester, New York. There he started his own paper, "The North Star". He also broke with Garrison. The two had become friends, but Douglass believed in using the political system to fight slavery, and that slaves had a right to revolt. Garrison had different ideas and the pair went their separate ways.

Douglass made his house a prominent station on the Underground Railroad and supported Abraham Lincoln for president. When war broke out he urged Lincoln to make the emancipation of slaves the main issue in the struggle. He also helped raise two regiments of black soldiers, with his two sons being among the first to enlist. After the war he moved to Washington, D.C., which would lead to his association with the Freedman's Savings Bank.

This institution had been founded with the intention of providing ex-slaves with a secure means of investing their wages. In its short life it had over 61,000 depositors and over \$3,250,000 in deposits. Most of these accounts were tiny and belonged to people who had never had any money of their own. For them, at least for a time, the bank did represent a trusted haven. Unfortunately, despite the good intentions of its founders, this trust would be betrayed thru mismanagement, abuse and fraud.



The bank was closely associated with the Freedmen's Bureau, which had been created to counsel and protect the newly emancipated. The bank traced its beginnings to attempts by Union generals to provide black soldiers with a means of safeguarding their pay. However, an army paymaster, A. M. Sperry, and a Congregational minister, John W. Alford, had the idea for a national bank that would complement the work of the Freedmen's Bureau. This idea was well received and on March 3, 1865 President Lincoln signed the bill bringing the bank into existence. Its expressed purpose was to receive deposits offered "by or in behalf of persons heretofore held in slavery in the United States".

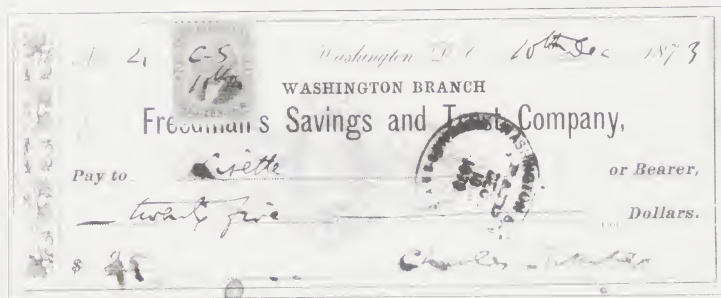


Figure 1. A check written on the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company, signed by abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner. The tax for the check was paid by the Type D revenue imprint, but a two-cent stamp was added anyway

The bank had potential problems from its onset. The unwieldy Board of trustees had fifty members and its first president, the New York banker William A. Booth, was soon replaced by the inexperienced Alford. The trustees were not personally liable and never became involved in the bank's management even when it was obvious that it was drifting into troubled waters. The central office was opened in Washington in July and would be followed by some thirty-six branches in seventeen states. The methods its agents used to create these branches were questionable. Among other things they often claimed that the deposits were guaranteed by the Federal Government, which proved to be all too false. When Douglass made his 1875 report on the bank's condition he stated that these agents used the "grossest deception" in promoting the bank. The bank was also resented by local authorities because two-thirds of the deposits were sent off to Washington, resulting in a loss of capital for the area.

Despite these problems, however, the bank did enjoy initial success. It not only provided a profitable place to invest but also endeavored to educate adults and even children to save. Pamphlets were distributed touting the advantages of thrift. "The aim was to instill in the minds of untutored Africans lessons of sobriety, wisdom and economy." This missionary creed was emphasized by the fact that many of the local officers were also ministers.

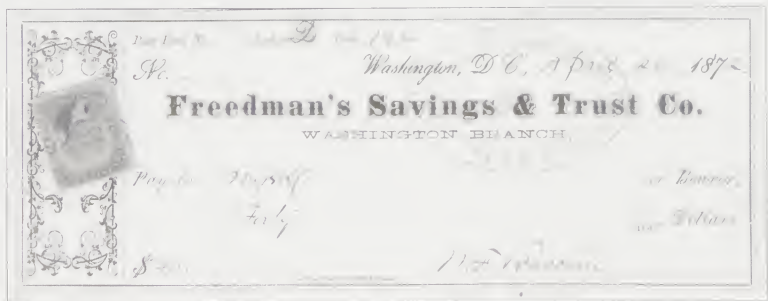


Figure 2. A passbook withdrawal check from April, 1872.

This lack of experience in its management along with the rapid expansion of its offices spelled trouble. Only half of the branches were ever able to meet expenses and in 1870, Congress revised its charter to allow loans. This added to the problems as many of these loans were risky.

Around this time the bank came under the control of Jay Cooke. During the Civil War he had helped raise millions for the North, but now he was looking out only for himself and his friends. Cooke took advantage of his appointment as a trustee as he and his cronies used the Freedmen's Bank to rid themselves of bad securities taken in by their own banks. When Jay Cooke & Co. failed in 1873, this created apprehension over the Freedmen's. Three heavy runs in eighteen months strained its resources. The last one alone drained over \$500,000 in reserves. Just as deposits were reaching a point where the bank might hope to make it out of the red, it found itself facing its greatest crisis.

The bank had survived poor management, loose bookkeeping and even embezzlement, but Cooke's manipulation proved too much. The general bad banking climate of the Panic of 1873 and the indifference of the trustees sealed its doom. As a last ditch measure, Frederick Douglass was invited to take over the presidency in the hopes that such a widely respected figure could restore confidence. Douglass felt honored at the appointment until he had time to examine the bank's condition. Soon he discovered the sad truth: "I was married to a corpse."

He immediately set about seeking federal aid, but Congress' enthusiasm had faded over the years and it failed to support a brief reorganization. A report to the Comptroller of the Currency revealed a large deficit and on June 28, 1874 the Freedmen's Savings Bank closed its doors. A board of commissioners was appointed to repay the depositors but without federal help it would prove impossible. Lawsuits recovered some loans and the extravagant Washington office building was sold, so enough was found for the board to repay about 40% of the claims. The Comptroller of the Currency took over this task in 1881 and continued until 1909, when \$1,731,854 had been repaid and \$1,208,071 was outstanding. Eventually some 10,000 depositors were left with claims averaging \$3.40 each.

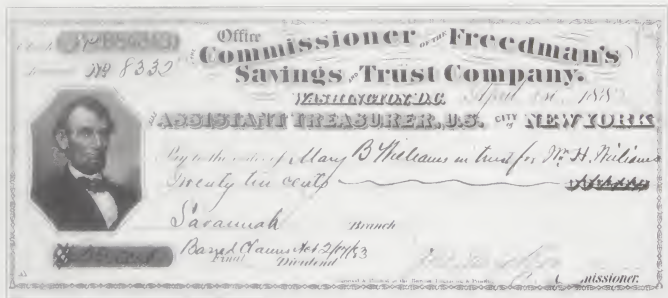
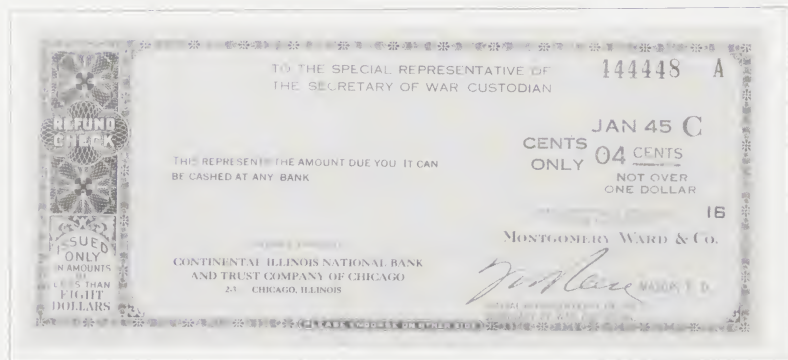


Figure 3. A dividend check signed by John Jay Knox, Comptroller of the Currency, in 1883. Note the amount of the check is twenty-two cents, a small return on a typically small account.

The bank's failure created much resentment among blacks to banks in general. This was a bitter blow to the many who had taken such pride in a bank they considered as "our" bank. Still, the Freedmen's Savings Bank had been conceived as a great humanitarian idea. Perhaps a statement made by Booker T. Washington best sums it up: "No work was ever undertaken for the benefit of the freedman more laudable in its purpose or more designed to assist people who had just come out of slavery, in their feet."

When the U.S. Army Took Over Montgomery Ward

by Lee E. Poleske



Illustrated above is a 4c refund check from Montgomery Ward & Company, dated January 1945. These refund checks for a small amount were commonly sent to customers who overpaid their catalog orders, usually miscalculating the postage they prepaid. But this refund check is also a reminder of a controversial action by the administration of Franklin Roosevelt during World War II. Note that the check is signed by an U.S. Army major as a special representative of the Secretary of War, Custodian.

In 1944 Montgomery Ward refused to respect a War Labor Board directive to renew a union contract. The employees then went on strike, closing down the business. Attorney General Frances Biddle advised President Roosevelt to intervene in the dispute. He argued that 75% of Montgomery Ward's customers were farmers and since production of food was vital for war operations, the government had a duty to take over Montgomery Ward. Secretary of War Stimson disagreed, saying that the company was not doing war business, therefore the army had no right to enter into the dispute. He also pointed out that government intervention would result in criticism of the administration "for seeking autocratic power."

President Roosevelt agreed with Biddle. In April 1944 the Attorney General led soldiers to the Chicago headquarters building of Montgomery Ward. The company's president, Avery L. Sewell, refused to leave the building and is supposed to have said, "To hell with the government." Two soldiers locked their hands together in a suit beneath him, two others steadied him by the shoulders and they carried him out of the building. A photograph of Sewell's conduct was voted best new photograph of the year.

The War Department became custodian for Montgomery Ward and the employees went back to work. As Secretary Stimson predicted, this action was widely condemned by the public and the press, but the Department oversaw operations of Montgomery Ward until the end of World War II.

The Eighteenth Annual National and World Paper Money Convention will be held November 20-23, 2003 at the Hilton Hotel - Saint Louis Airport, 10330 Natural Bridge Road, Saint Louis, MO. Show hours are Thursday noon - 6:00, Friday and Saturday, 10:00 - 6:00 and Sunday, 10:00 - 4:00. There is a \$5 admission charge, good all four days Thursday - Sunday, and for anyone coming Sunday only, there will be no charge. There is a Preview on Wednesday which will cost \$50 for admission.

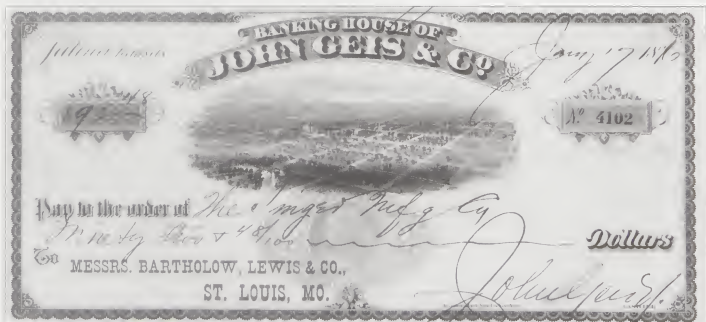
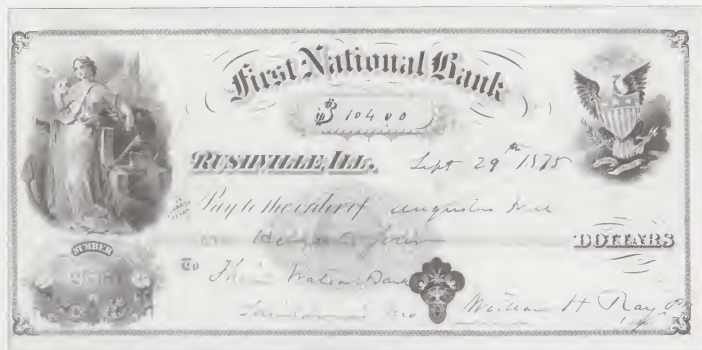
An ASCC meeting will be held on Saturday the 22nd, featuring a talk by John & Nancy Wilson. Check the program for it.

THE CHECK COLLECTOR is a quarterly publication of the ASCC.

The Two Cent Revenue Stamped Paper of the United States, 1865-1883

by Ronald Leshner
(Part 11)

C. AMERICAN PHOTOTYPE COMPANY
TYPE F - ENGRAVED CASHIER'S CHECKS

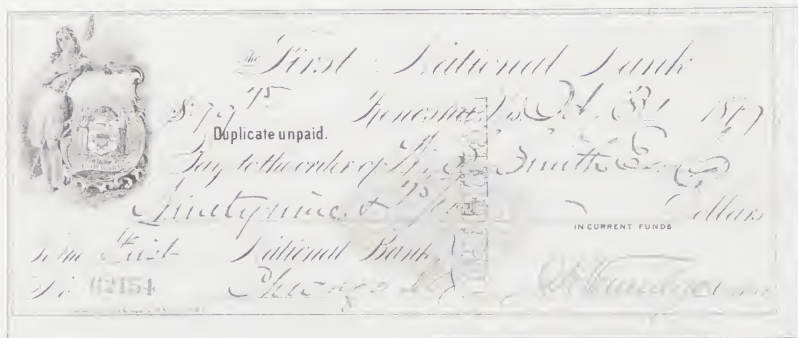


The sixth and last two cent design of the American Phototype Company came into use in mid-1875; it remained in use for about a year. The American Phototype Company continued to deliver stamped paper until November, 1876, when the Graphic Company took over all contract printing of imprinted stamps.

[“Messrs. Bartholow, Lewis & Co., St. Louis, MO.” is printed in green on the lower draft.]

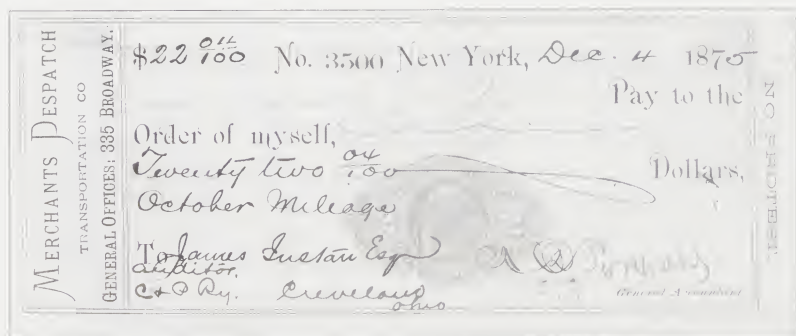
C. AMERICAN PHOTOTYPE COMPANY
TYPE F - BILL OF EXCHANGE AND RAILROAD DRAFT

Bill of Exchange - Original



Domestic bills of exchange were quite scarce. By this time most bank drafts were sent as a single instrument, instead of in pairs as the words ORIGINAL and DUPLICATE UNPAID on this instrument would seem to indicate.

Railroad Draft



The payment of intercompany charges among the railroads was paid outside the normal banking system using railroad drafts like this example.

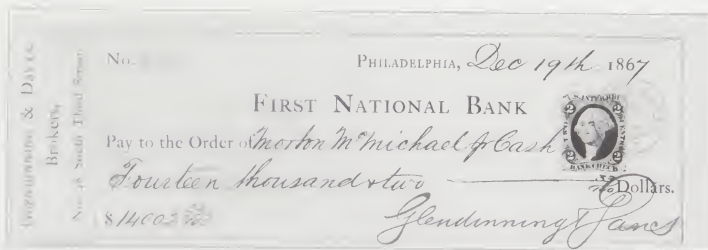
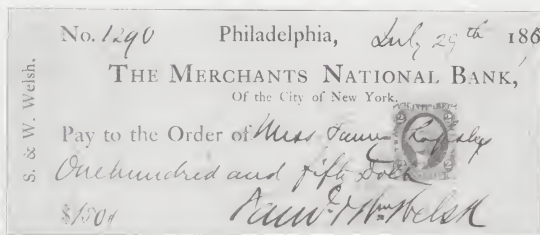
D. BUTLER & CARPENTER

A COMPETITOR FOR THE AMERICAN PHOTOTYPE COMPANY

Adhesive Stamp



Imprinted Stamp of Adhesive Design
Inscribed "Bank Check"

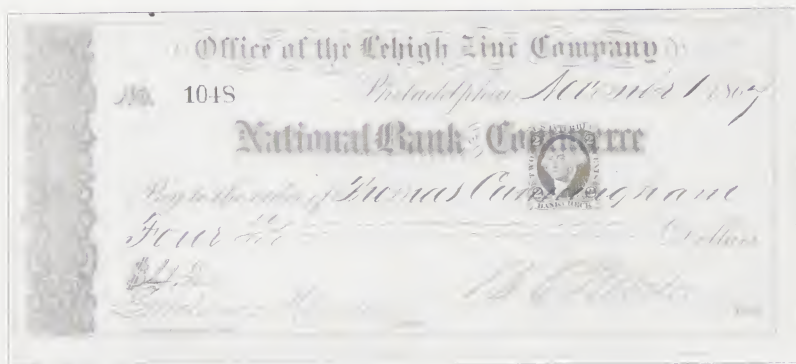


Butler & Carpenter was the Philadelphia firm that had an exclusive contract with the government for printing the adhesive stamps beginning in 1862. In early 1866 they gained a portion of the imprinting business when a group of New York stationers protested the monopolistic practices of the American Phototype Company (Section B of this Exhibit.) Due to delays in the government approval of a design, development of procedures for ordering and imprinting stamps, and learning how to make satisfactory impressions on the large variety of papers delivered to them by stationers, Butler & Carpenter was only able to deliver the first imprinted stamps by June 30, 1866 using the first issue adhesive design with the title BANK CHECK.

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER

USE OF ADHESIVE DESIGNS FOR PRINTING

Inscribed BANK CHECK



Inscribed U.S. INTER. REV



Butler & Carpenter imprinted their adhesive stamp designs onto documents with two different inscriptions, "Bank Check" and the more general "U.S. Inter. Rev." It seems reasonable to conclude that instruments imprinted from June, 1866 through February, 1867 received the Bank Check design and instruments imprinted during March, 1867 received the U.S. Inter. Rev. design. The use of the adhesive stamp designs ceased after March, 1867.

[The printing on the Lehigh Zinc Company check is light violet.]

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER**INTRODUCING THE ENGRAVED CIRCULAR DIE****Model**

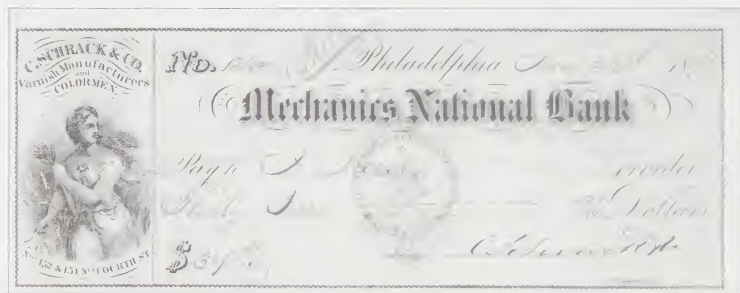
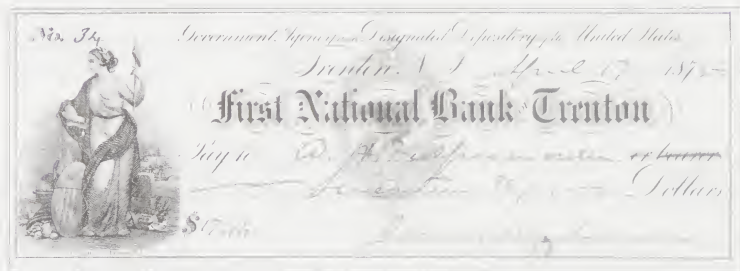
The central vignette of Washington was printed separately and pasted over the impression of the surrounding frame. Two examples have been recorded with the head of Washington; the other is in the Eagle collection in the National Philatelic Museum and differs in that the cross-hatching around the head of Washington fills the entire circular area.

**Trial Color Proof
India on Card**

The development of this larger circular design was almost certainly at the insistence of the government. The issued stamp had the vignette of an eagle substituted for Washington. Although the design was approved February 12, 1867, it was not used for imprinting until April.

[The proof is printed in green.]

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER
TYPE H - THE CIRCULAR DIE

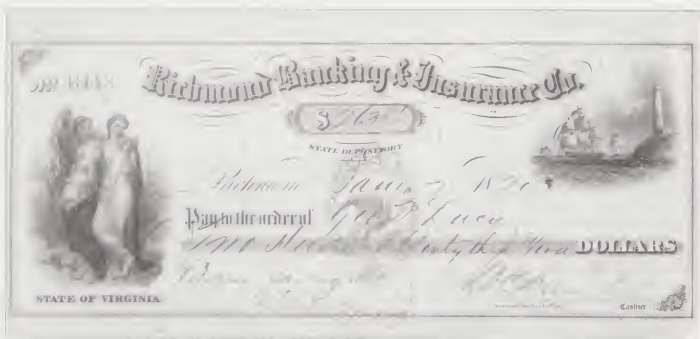
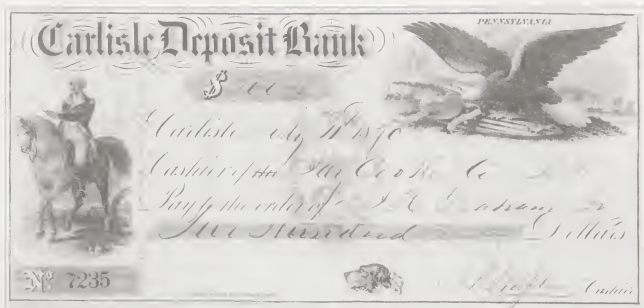


Internal Revenue requested that Butler & Carpenter develop a larger die for imprinting stamps on checks and receipts. This engraved design was the response. It was such a popular design that the Carpenter firm continued to offer it until they lost their contract to print stamps in 1875.

[The Mechanic's National Bank check has a light orange underprint.]

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER

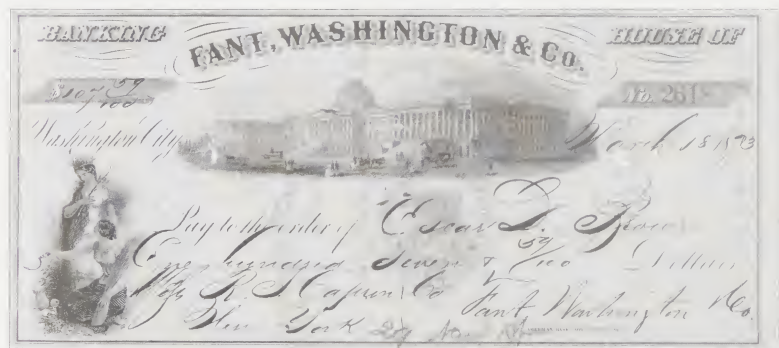
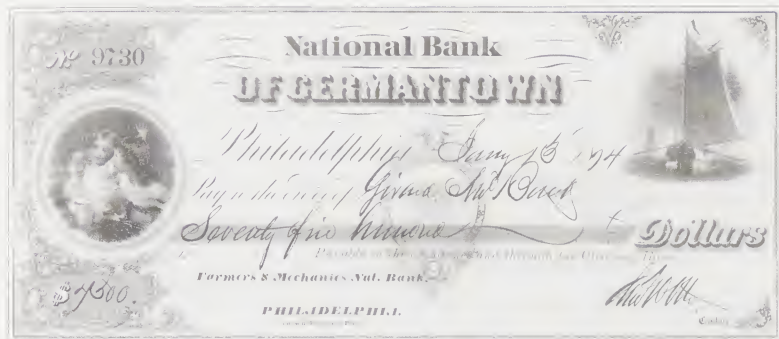
TYPE H - ENGRAVED CASHIER'S CHECKS



Shown here are two bank cashier's checks showing engraved vignettes produced by the Philadelphia office of the American Bank Note Company.

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER

TYPE H - ENGRAVED CASHIER'S CHECKS



Shown here are two bank checks showing engraved vignettes produced by the Philadelphia office of the American Bank Note Company, located in the 200 block of Walnut Street. It is probably not surprising that these cashier's checks were imprinted by the Carpenter firm, which was located in the 200 block of Chestnut Street and thus they were situated about a block apart.

[The wording "Payable in the exchange and through the Clearing House, Farmers & Mechanics Nat. Bank / PHILADELPHIA" is printed in blue on the National Bank of Germantown cashier's check.]

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER
TYPE H - RECEIPTS

THE UNION LEAGUE OF PHILADELPHIA.

No. 1867

Received, Philadelphia, Nov 1 1867

from C. C. Carpenter

Annual Subscription for 1868 \$ 1.00

Wm. J. Carpenter Treasurer.

THE UNION LEAGUE OF PHILADELPHIA.

No. 1868

Received, Philadelphia, Nov 1 1867

from C. C. Carpenter

Annual Subscription for 1868 \$ 1.00

Wm. J. Carpenter Treasurer.

THE UNION LEAGUE OF PHILADELPHIA.

No. 1869

Received, Philadelphia, Nov 1 1867

from C. C. Carpenter

Annual Subscription for 1868 \$ 1.00

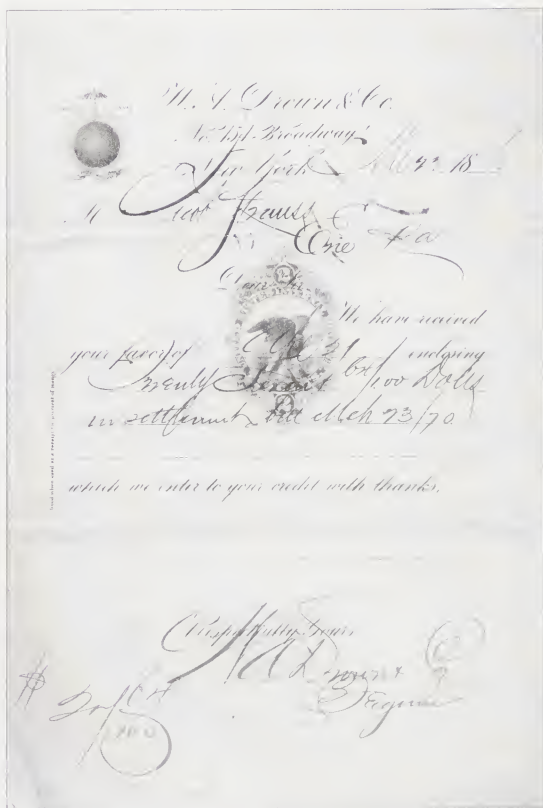
Wm. J. Carpenter Treasurer.

These three annual receipts bear the type H stamp imprinted by Butler & Carpenter and the successor firm of Joseph Carpenter. The receipts show payment of the annual dues to the prestigious Union League of Philadelphia. From 1867-70 many subscribers of receipts without restrictive clauses had their receipts returned by the Carpenter firm for their own printer to add the clause. The reason for no clause on these receipts is that they were simply reorders of a form that had been approved prior to the requirement of clauses.

[The middle receipt is printed on violet-pink paper, and the bottom receipt is on yellow paper.]

D. BUTLER & CARPENTER

TYPE H - RECEIPT WITH 10-WORD INSTRUCTIVE CLAUSE



This is a very unusual receipt for at least two reasons. First it is unusual for a New York firm to be sending its receipts to Philadelphia for imprinting. Secondly, the ten-word receipt clause was added vertically at the left.

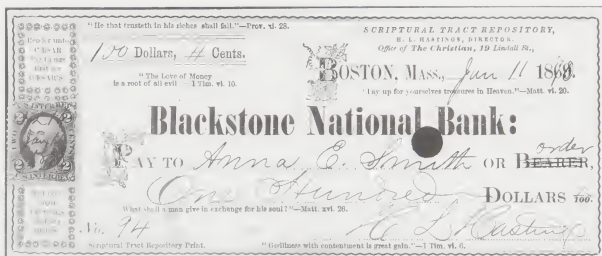
This is the eleventh installment in a continuing series which will eventually reprint Ron Leshner's gold-medal winning exhibit of two-cent Civil War revenue stamped paper. It will be continued in the next issue.

Comments in brackets were added by the Editor when it was not obvious from the text as to the color of the checks and/or imprints.

Banking Advice from the Scriptures

Bob Hohertz

"The Love of Money is a root of all evil." What great advice to find on a bank check, with, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven." Rather than in the bank?



The Blackstone National Bank of Boston may have raised a corporate eyebrow when it was asked to supply checks of this design, but "The Customer is Always Right."

The signer, Horace Lorenzo Hastings, was born November 26, 1831 in Blandford, Massachusetts. He began writing hymns and preaching in his teen years and in 1866 established a monthly paper, The Christian. He founded the Scriptural Tract Repository in 1865. This organization published books of sermons and other religious works for a number of years.

Back to the check. If I were running the Blackstone Bank I would not be comfortable having, "He that trusteth in his riches shall fail," at the top of one of our checks. What doth that predict for the future of your bank?

The place to provide the return stamp has an appropriate quotation: "Render unto CÆSAR the things that are CÆSAR'S; and unto GOD the things that are GOD'S." But the line under the place to write the amount is, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The implied answer in this case is one hundred dollars...

At any time, the signer can assure himself that "Godliness with contentment is great gain." We will let Mr. Hastings have the last words, which just might be describing a place where the ideal bank could be found:

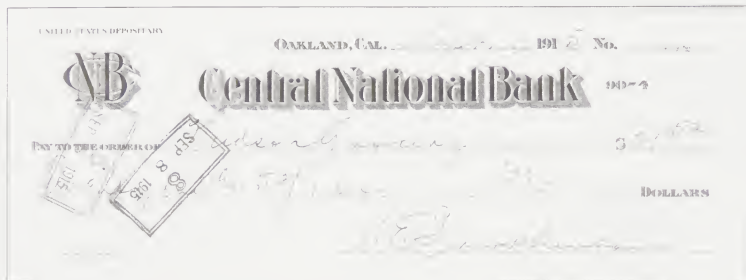
Shall we meet in a stony city,
Where the towers of crystal shone?
Where the walls are all of Jasper,
Built by workmanship divine?

Source of information on H. L. Hastings: http://www.cyberhymnal.org/bio/h/a/s/hastings_hl.htm

Bank Numbers

by David L. Shafer

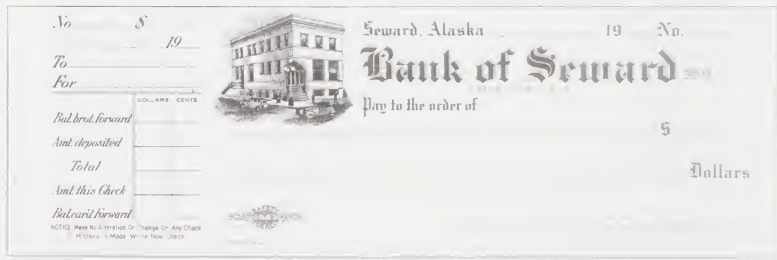
The preprinted bank numbers on the face of checks have become increasingly confusing over the years. These numbers began to be seen in the early 20th century, perhaps as a result of the establishment of the Federal Reserve System in 1913. The check illustrated below, dated September 1, 1915 and drawn on the Central National Bank of Oakland, is the oldest example in my collection of a check with a bank number (i.e., 90-4).



The first part of this hyphenated number refers to a specific city or state. Numbers 1 - 49 are reserved for cities, numbers 50 - 99 are reserved for each of the 50 states, and number 101 is used for U.S. territories and dependencies. Please refer to the exhibit listing the geographic location associated with each of these numbers.

As may be seen, New York City is number 1 and Chicago is number 2, etc. Thus, at least the lower numbers appear to have been assigned based on the relative size or financial importance of these cities in the early 20th century. Consequently, cities such as Houston have relatively high numbers, and other cities, such as Atlanta, were not assigned a number of their own, while some cities that are relatively small today (e.g., Savannah) were assigned a number.

The largest states were assigned numbers divisible by 10 (e.g., New York received 50 and California received 90). The remaining states were assigned numbers alphabetically by geographic area. Thus, the other 8 states that were in the territory of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco in 1913 are numbered 91 through 98 for Arizona through Washington. Wyoming, while not in the 12th Federal Reserve District, was assigned 99, and Hawaii and Alaska were subsequently assigned 59 and 89, respectively. However, as illustrated by the following check, it appears that there was at least one Alaskan bank that utilized number 59 at one point.



The bank numbers themselves appear to have been assigned using different procedures in different cities. In some cities (e.g., Portland, Oregon), bank number 1 was assigned to the local Federal Reserve Office (i.e., 24-1). In other cities, bank number 1 appears to be the oldest bank (e.g., 1-1 is Bank of New York, of which Alexander Hamilton was a founder).

Over the years as banks have closed or consolidated, numerous bank numbers have been discontinued. For example, in the case of New York City, 1-1 is Bank of New York; 1-2 is JP Morgan Chase; and 1-8 is Citibank, with numbers 3 through 7 no longer being used.

At one time, numerous banks (especially banks in the western United States) chose to use a separate bank number for each of their branches. However, these were phased out in the 1970s with each bank being restricted, in general, to a single bank number for a Federal Reserve Office. Thus, a bank with offices throughout California might use one bank number for offices in the territory of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, and another bank number for offices in the area served by the Los Angeles branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. As a result of all of these factors, thousands and thousands of bank numbers have been phased out over the years.

Note that state treasurers continue to be assigned bank numbers (see below) and also note that major corporations (e.g., railroads) once had their own bank numbers and could effectively draw checks or drafts on themselves, but that practice was ultimately phased out about 25 years ago.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE			
To the State Treasurer Salem, Oregon			
			96-10 1232
SSN			
VOID AFTER TWO YEARS FROM DATE OF ISSUE			
000000-RS RETURN NO	23 YEAR	07261866 CHECK NO.	05/01/87 CHECK DATE
PAY EXACTLY			CHECK AMOUNT
*****4 DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS			\$ *****4.00
TO THE ORDER OF			
SHAFFER JACK S			
C/O DAVID L SHAFFER			
P.O. BOX 26123			
KANSAS CITY MO 64196			
<i>Richard A. Thunn</i>			
⑆07261866⑆ ⑆23200⑆ ⑆500⑆			

As time progressed and credit unions became empowered to offer checking accounts, it was necessary for thousands of additional bank numbers to be assigned. This was initially accomplished by assigning bank numbers beginning with 7000 as shown in the following example of a check drawn on Benjamin Franklin Savings and Loan of Portland, Oregon.

JACK SHAFFER		101
		24.7038/3230
Pay to the order of _____		19 _____
_____ \$ _____		
Dollars		
The Ben. Franklin		NORTHWEST DAILY INCOME PLAN VALID FOR \$500.00 OR GREATER
⑆323070380⑆044 0024009⑆ ⑆1010⑆		

The illustrations of the Benjamin Franklin check and the Oregon State Treasurer check introduce an additional level of complexity to the preprinted bank numbers. As may be seen, these numbers are now "fractions" with a hyphenated bank number (e.g., 96-10) being printed above a three or, in many cases, a four digit number. This number is known as a transit routing number, and can be easily dissected. The first two digits (e.g., 01-12) refer to one of the twelve Federal Reserve Banks:

01	Boston	07	Chicago
02	New York City	08	St. Louis
03	Philadelphia	09	Minneapolis
04	Cleveland	10	Kansas City
05	Richmond	11	Dallas
06	Atlanta	12	San Francisco

The third digit generally, but not always, refers to the Federal Reserve office within that Federal Reserve district. If the third digit is a 1, this indicates that the check is payable through the Federal Reserve Bank itself (e.g., San Francisco). The remaining numbers were assigned (in alphabetical order) to the offices of that Federal Reserve Bank. For example, in the case of Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, office number 2 is Los Angeles, office number 3 is Portland, office number 4 is Salt Lake City, and office number 5 is Seattle.

Note that for checks drawn on thrifts or credit unions, very often 20 will be added to the first two digits (e.g., rather than 1 through 12, the first two digits will range from 21 to 32), but nevertheless these items are payable through the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston or San Francisco, etc.

The fourth digit usually, but not always, indicates where the check is drawn. Generally, if the fourth digit is a 0, that means the check is drawn on a bank located in the Federal Reserve city itself. If the fourth digit is something other than a 0, this typically indicates that the check is drawn outside of the Federal Reserve city, and typically designates a specific state. For example, in the case of Portland, a fourth digit of 1 indicates that the checks are drawn in northern Idaho; a digit of 2 indicates that the check is drawn in Oregon; and a 3 indicates that the check is drawn in southern Washington. Note that the states are in alphabetical order. Note that this fourth digit does not indicate check-clearing time. There is some confusion on this subject, even among bankers, because a fourth digit of 0 generally indicates that a check was relatively easy to clear and thus in some cases will clear in 0 days, but this is not necessarily the case, and certainly a fourth digit of three or higher does not indicate that many days of clearing time as virtually all checks provisionally clear in just a single business day.

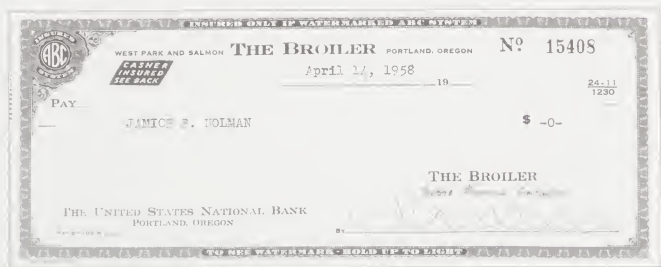
As may be seen from the representative checks, these numbers from the upper-right hand corner of the check then transform themselves into what is known as transit routing-ABA number (printed in magnetic ink) at the bottom left-hand corner.

Originally, as shown in the following check drawn in Arkansas, the four-digit transit routing number was separated from the four digit ABA number by a dash. (Note that the number of 821 is no longer used, having been replaced by 829.)

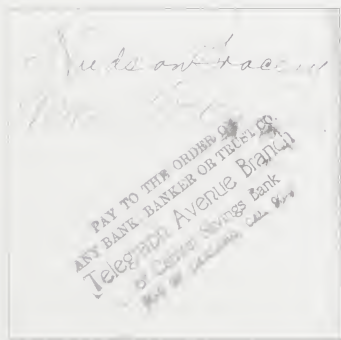
	ENGLAND, ARK.	19	No.
BANK OF ENGLAND		81-213 821	
PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____		\$ _____	
FOR _____		DOLLARS	
⑆08210213⑆			

However, as can be seen in the case of the Oregon State Treasurer check, the transit routing ABA number now consists of nine digits. This ninth digit is a check digit used by bank processing equipment in order to validate the accuracy of all nine digits and, in some cases, to deduce a missing or unreadable digit.

These magnetic ink numbers began to evolve in the late 1950s when IBM released equipment, which could be used to rapidly read and sort checks utilizing magnetic ink character recognition (MICR). Initially, as illustrated by the following check issued by a restaurant in Portland, the four-digit transit routing number was simply added to the top right-hand corner of the check, but during the transition period magnetic ink was not added. However, the use of magnetic ink was rapidly adopted in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and it certainly would not be possible to process billions of checks a year without that functionality.



Initially, bank numbers were used primarily as a convenient and relatively foolproof means of identifying banks. This was particularly important because so many banks had similar names. There were innumerable First National Banks throughout the United States, but only one (First National Bank of Chicago, now Bank One of Chicago). These numbers were utilized not only on the face of checks, but also on endorsements. (Refer to the endorsement below, which is from the back of the previously illustrated check drawn in Oakland, wherein the Telegraph Avenue branch of Central Savings Bank has utilized its number (0001) in endorsing the deposited check.) In fact, bank personnel working in check processing will ultimately remember banks simply by their number rather than by their name. These numbers then naturally evolved into the IR-ABA number that is vital to high-speed processing checks.



Bank Prefixes

1	New York City, N.Y.	51	Connecticut
2	Chicago, IL	52	Maine
3	Philadelphia, PA	53	Massachusetts
4	St. Louis, MO	54	New Hampshire
5	Boston, MA	55	New Jersey
6	Cleveland, OH	56	Ohio
7	Baltimore, MD	57	Rhode Island
8	Pittsburgh, PA	58	Vermont
9	Detroit, MI	59	Hawaii
10	Buffalo, NY	60	Pennsylvania
11	San Francisco, CA	61	Alabama
12	Milwaukee, WI	62	Delaware
13	Cincinnati, OH	63	Florida
14	New Orleans, LA	64	Georgia
15	Washington, DC	65	Maryland
16	Los Angeles, CA	66	North Carolina
17	Minneapolis, MN	67	South Carolina
18	Kansas City, MO	68	Virginia
19	Seattle, WA	69	West Virginia
20	Indianapolis, IN	70	Illinois
21	Louisville, KY	71	Indiana
22	St. Paul, MN	72	Iowa
23	Denver, CO	73	Kentucky
24	Portland, OR	74	Michigan
25	Columbus, OH	75	Minnesota
26	Memphis, TN	76	Nebraska
27	Omaha, NE	77	North Dakota
28	Spokane, WA	78	South Dakota
29	Albany, NY	79	Wisconsin
		80	Missouri
30	San Antonio, TX		
31	Salt Lake City, UT	81	Arkansas
32	Dallas, TX	82	Colorado
33	Des Moines, IA	83	Kansas
34	Tacoma, WA	84	Louisiana
35	Houston, TX	85	Mississippi
36	St. Joseph, MO	86	Oklahoma
37	Fort Worth, TX	87	Tennessee
38	Savannah, Georgia	88	Texas
39	Oklahoma City, OK	89	Alaska
40	Wichita, KS	90	California
41	Sioux City, Iowa	91	Arizona
42	Pueblo, CO	92	Idaho
43	Lincoln, NE	93	Montana
44	Topeka, KS	94	Nevada
45	Dubuque, IA	95	New Mexico
46	Galveston, TX	96	Oregon
47	Cedar Rapids, IA	97	Utah
48	Waco, TX	98	Washington
49	Muskogee, OK	99	Wyoming
50	New York	101	Puerto Rico
		101	US Dependencies

Announcements

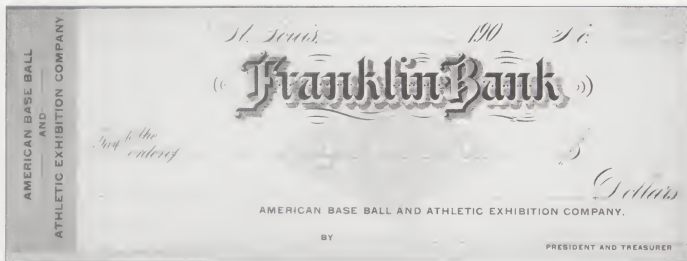
Dues. After holding the line for a year or two after we probably should have acted, it is time to increase our dues structure. The Board granted permission to go as high as \$15, but several suggested we keep it to \$13 if possible. Therefore, dues for 2004 will be \$13 for members with a mailing address in the U.S., Canadian and Mexican addresses will be \$17 and other foreign addresses will be \$23. We will maintain this pricing as long as possible.

Memphis Meeting. An August issue of *The Bank Note Reporter* mentioned that the ASCC did not meet at the Memphis International Paper Money Show in June. John Wilson graciously volunteered that he and Judith Murphy would run it in my absence, but the Society of Paper Money Collectors meeting which preceded it ran significantly overtime, and neither John nor Nancy were able to leave it in time to be at the ASCC meeting. By the time Judith was able to get away the people who showed up at the ASCC meeting had dispersed. Both want to apologize, particularly to the folks who showed up and found no one there to meet and greet them.

Saint Louis Meeting. On Saturday, November 22 John and Nancy Wilson will give a talk called Collecting and Having Fun with Checks. Check the meeting schedule for time and place. Details of the meeting are on page 7 of this issue.

Board of Directors. Any nominations for the Board of Directors need to be in my hands by the middle of December. Our by-laws do not require voting if the number of nominees is less than or equal to the number of members whose terms expire at the end of 2003. These are Messrs Leifer, Naven, Ryman and Turrini.

Charity. Board Member Phillip Ryman mentioned recently that he is the Director of the Meriweather Scholarship Foundation and would appreciate any donations of older checks, store tokens or coins to help raise funds for the Foundation. If you are interested, please get in touch with Phillip at the address listed on page 3.



A tip of the check-collecting hat to the end of the baseball season. Does anyone have any information concerning the American Base Ball and Athletic Exhibition Company, presumably of Saint Louis? A search at the Missouri Historical Society came up with nothing.

The check was printed by the Woodward & Tiernan Printing Company of Saint Louis.

BH

Secretary's Report

Coleman Leifer

This report includes changes received through August 20, 2003

NEW MEMBERS

- | | | |
|------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1763 | LARSON, SHAWN A. (C/D) PO Box 3891 Englewood CO 80155
(by Charles Kemp) | 2 (CO), 21, 22 (mining), 30 |
| 1764 | WOOD, ROY J. 570 Cove Rd Wilsonville AL 35186
(thru the Internet) | 2 (AL), 4, 14, 20-22, 30 |

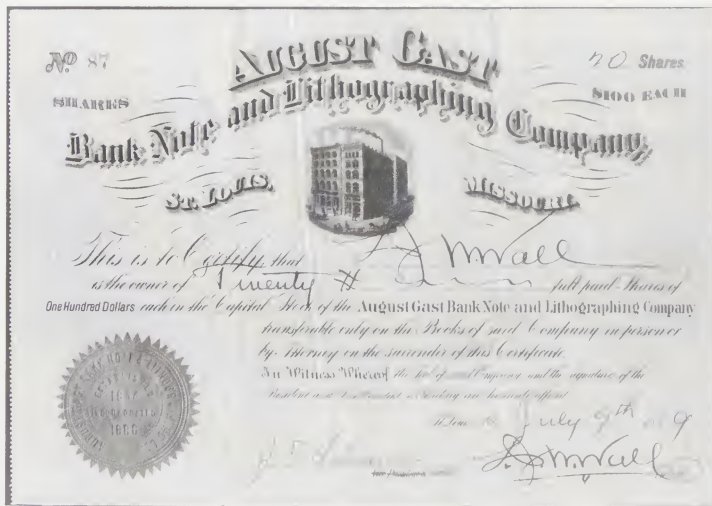
REINSTATED

- | | | |
|------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1209 | MORRISSEY, MICHAEL (C/D) Stuart House Philatelics
PO Box 441 Worthington OH 43085 | 1, 4, 20, 22-23, 25-26, 30-31 |
| 1364 | REEVES, ROBERT 220 Sunny Ridge Murchison TX 75778-5532 | 1, 2, 7 |
| 1492 | WINNERS, LES (C/D) PO Box 1442 Brandon MS 39043-1442 | 2 |

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1230 | SMITH, WILLIAM B. (C/D) 517 Amanda Drive Bear DE 19701 |
|------|--|

A Find in the Marketplace



A stock certificate issued by the August Gast Bank Note and Lithographing Company, a security printer operating in the last half of the Nineteenth and first half of the Twentieth Centuries.

Member Exchange

Railroad transportation tickets and passes wanted. U.S. only. Mostly pre-1930. I also have extras for trade or sale. **Dan Benice**, Box 5708, Cary, NC 27512. Phone 919-468-5510.

Wanted: Pre-1883 checks/drafts with revenue stamps or imprints. Describe fully, include best price. Will also trade duplicate RN's. **Steve Willock**, 8850 Calle Buena Vista, Oro Valley, AZ 85737.

Wanted: Checks, picture postcards, National Currency of New York/Connecticut banks. All related items considered for purchase. **Leon Silverman**, 237 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605. E-mail lcsilver@optionline.net.

Collector of Missouri checks looking to trade and correspond with other collectors of Missouri financial paper. **Gregg Voss**, 13 Roland Ave., Ballwin, MO 63021. Phone 314-230-9274.

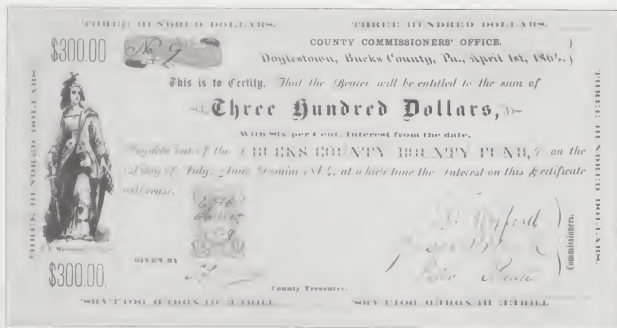
Wanted: US Government checks and Wisconsin financial documents. **James A. Downey**, 1534 Pennsylvania Street, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235. E-mail mufelika@itol.com.

Wanted: RN checks, drafts, documents from AK, DC, NJ, WY. Will buy or trade. Send photocopies/scans with asking price. **Peter Martin**, POB 791, State College, PA 16804. E-mail pmartin2020@aol.com.

Exchange postings will be taken from ASCC members who are collectors only. Postings of 20 words or less are free; please remit \$3 each issue for postings of 21 to fifty words. Name and address do **not** count toward the 20 words.

Neither the Editor nor the ASCC can be responsible for compliance with any promises made in postings, or in response to them. Be very clear as to the value you place on your material when discussing a trade. Fairness and common courtesy are to be expected, but common sense must rule.

A Conversation Piece



This promissory note was issued by the Bucks County, PA County Commissioners' Office, payable out of the Bounty Fund. It was issued on April 1, 1864, payable on July 1 of that year. State instruments were taxable at the time, and the rate on this one was for promissory notes payable in 63 to 93 days, three cents for each \$200 or fraction, if total was more than \$20. The amount being three hundred dollars, the tax was six cents. This was paid by a solo first issue six-cent Inland Exchange stamp, a rather unusual late matching usage.

*Ruth A. Miller Knott,**Ephemerist*

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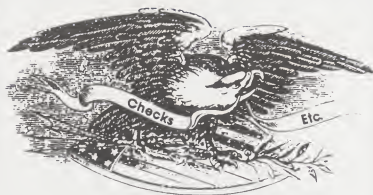
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